Hands On®

Inside Tips For Practice Building

The Newsletter of the American Massage Therapy Association

Volume XVII, Number 4 July/August 2001

AMTA's Efforts Get You Results

The acceptance and use of massage therapy is growing at a rapid rate, in large part because of the work you direct your association to do. Many articles in this issue of *Hands On* summarize key programs that continue to build interest and use for massage, including:

- AMTA's National Massage Therapy Awareness Week (NMTAW)–Page 2;
- AMTA Massage Emergency Response Team℠ (MERT)–Page 4;
- AMTA's involvement at national health-care conferences–Page 6;
- Training members to be spokespersons for AMTA–Page 6;
- Promoting massage therapy research–Page 7.

NMTAW is one of the visible ways AMTA is letting the public know about massage. This annual event, sponsored by AMTA, gives members the chance to get involved in activities that promote awareness of the profession.

AMTA is communicating to numerous publics that the best way to find a qualified massage therapist is through *AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist*® national locator service. We receive approximately 9,000 visits a month to the Web site; that's approximately four potential clients AMTA brings for each Professional Active member per year! [If you are a Professional Active member and are not yet a part of the locator service, enroll today by going to: www.amtamassage.org/members/enroll8.htm.]

The demand for massage has influenced hospitals and other health-care organizations. This past spring, AMTA sent information about *AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist* to executives from accredited hospitals. This material educated hospital administrators to use AMTA as their resource for finding qualified massage therapists.

By attending national conferences, AMTA reaches out to other organizations in integrative medicine. AMTA President **Steve Olson (ND)** and AMTA Member-At-Large **Debra Brooks (IA)** represented AMTA at the Integrative Medicine Industry Leadership Summit and the 2001 Congress on Healthcare Management, respectively.

We are also seeking members to be trained as AMTA media spokespersons. And we're encouraging members to get involved in massage therapy research.

Massage therapy isn't becoming more widespread on its own. It's through your efforts, combined with the valuable input you give to AMTA, that consumers are realizing massage really does work.

COS Grows To Record Members

This spring, the AMTA Council of Schools (COS) welcomed its 250th member. This is fantastic growth from June 1998, when school members became an AMTA classification and the COS had approximately 50 member schools.

COS consists of schools dedicated to promoting excellence in massage therapy education, and continues to focus on providing quality programs for AMTA School members and their students.

At the Council of Schools Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting, members conduct the Council's business, receive quality education and benefit from sharing challenges and rewards with their colleagues through many networking events.

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COS Growth

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During the COS Teachers Conference, educators receive continuing education relevant to teaching, from instruction styles to learning styles. This year's Teachers Conference is scheduled for August 9-12 at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

The *Council Communicator*, the Council's newsletter, dedicates two to three issues per year to keeping School members current on issues, concerns and topics pertinent to its membership, from the latest teaching trends and strategies to connecting with chapters.

The growth of COS ultimately contributes to the healthy growth of the massage therapy profession by graduating more qualified massage therapists into the field. If you have questions regarding the Council of Schools, please call 847-864-0123, ext. 150.

NMTAW — Get Into The Action

Start making plans for AMTA's National Massage Therapy Awareness Week (NMTAW), which runs from October 21-27, 2001. This year's theme is "Massage–It Really Works."

We know massage works to help bolster the immune system, relieve stress, increase endorphins, break up scar tissue, and contributes in other ways to enhance the health of clients. One goal in choosing this theme is to communicate to the public that massage is valuable and that it should take advantage of the benefits. Massage isn't just a luxury; there is a growing body of research that shows *it really works*.

The National Office will provide chapters and AMTA School members with information and materials to help them with local and statewide publicity efforts. By mid-August, that information also will be available to all members on the Members' Section of the AMTA Web site. The National Office will promote NMTAW with national news media, post a list of local AMTA events on the Web site and assist chapters to respond to media inquiries.

Again this year, Home Depot's "Building Better Health" program will support NMTAW by working with AMTA chapters that want to hold massage demonstrations for employees in Home Depot stores. Chapter presidents will soon receive information on how they can do this. [Home Depot has asked that individual members not contact the stores.]

The collaborative efforts of chapters, members, massage schools and the AMTA National Office have demonstrated that National Massage Therapy Awareness Week is an important tool in educating the public about the benefits and efficacy of massage and the quality of AMTA massage therapists. For more information about NMTAW, call 847-864-0123, ext. 149.

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Membership in AMTA is open to all qualified individuals regardless of race, creed, national origin, gender, age, marital status, religion, sexual orientation or physical handicap.

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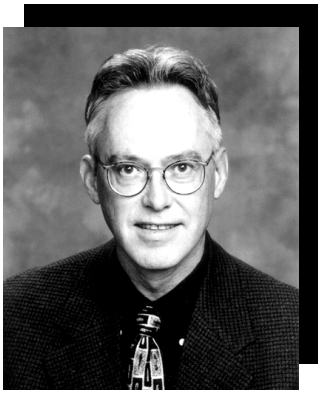
President's Letter



AMTA Embraces Many Specialties

There was a time in our history when the Swedish massage approach completely dominated member practices. Today, one can no longer assume that massage means the practice of one single approach or modality. A large variety of skills and approaches exist within the practices of AMTA members.

Interestingly, while we call the style Swedish massage, the roots were a blending of Eastern and Western techniques and philosophies, systematized by a Swede and described with French terms (i.e., effleurage, petrissage and tapotement). So while the Swedish massage approach was identified by one term, it embraced a full range of philosophies and practices.

In the early 1990s, the AMTA Board of Directors defined massage therapy as "a profession in which the practitioner applies manual techniques, and may apply adjunctive therapies, with the intention of positively affecting the health and well-being of the client."

This definition of massage therapy reflects the styles, techniques and approaches of the massage therapy profession today.

We can utilize many varied approaches to bodywork. As a massage therapist, having a number of skills from which to address soft-tissue problems increases our ability to serve the consumer and to thrive in the marketplace. However, it is the practitioner's responsibility to represent his or her credentials and training accurately. We must avoid using specialty names that are trademarked, service-marked or registered (i.e., Rolfing®), unless we are authorized to use them.

There is a major point that I want to expand upon. On several occasions I have been told that practitioners of non-Western approaches to the body do not feel comfortable with AMTA membership, because they do not do Swedish massage. Please help me get the message out that AMTA supports all of its members regardless of the massage or bodywork approach they utilize.

Steven C. Olson
President, AMTA

You Own Your Name

I take very seriously the need to ensure that AMTA supports inclusiveness in the massage therapy profession. However, I take equally seriously the need to protect the privacy of AMTA members and the association. AMTA recently filed a lawsuit against the publishers of *Massage Today*, produced by MPAmedia, a for-profit corporation. The suit alleges misappropriation and misuse of AMTA proprietary information. Member contact information from the *AMTA Membership Registry*® and AMTA's logo were used without first seeking permission.

This lawsuit was carefully considered by the AMTA volunteer leadership before being filed. AMTA has worked very hard during its long history to establish a professional and well-respected organization of which its members can be proud. Because of that hard work, the AMTA member list, logo and identity are the most valuable assets of your association. You have chosen to invest your dues dollars in AMTA, and we will fight to protect that investment.

There is also a privacy issue centered on the fact that you own your name and contact information. AMTA respects this and never releases your name without permission. MPAmedia has taken your name without permission and is using it to make a profit.

AMTA will always support your right to practice massage therapy and protect your right to privacy. —*Steve Olson*

Fingerprints

Helpful Tips For Screening New Clients

Some useful client-screening tips for massage therapists, provided by **Hannah Arbizzani (IL)** and **Toni Roberts (GA)**, include the following suggestions:

- ❑ Let new clients know upfront that your practice is completely focused on therapeutic, not sexual, massage.
- ❑ Never book new clients on the same day they call. If they're looking for a therapeutic massage, they'll be willing to wait a day or more.
- ❑ Ask new clients how they found out about your practice.
- ❑ Ask new clients for references if they are not listed in the telephone book or directory assistance.
- ❑ Get caller ID. That way you know if new clients are giving you their correct name and telephone number.
- ❑ Watch for red flags. If a person asks what you are wearing, what you look like or if the potential client won't provide you with a name and telephone number, he or she may not be a legitimate client.

MERT Deployed In Iowa

Members of the Iowa Chapter AMTA Massage Emergency Response Team℠ (MERT) were sent into action after the flooding along the Mississippi River earlier this spring. AMTA MERT volunteers worked on members of the National Guard in Davenport, Iowa. Professional members who helped in the effort included **Jeannie Griebel**, **Chris Sparks**, **Terry Eicher** (chapter MERT coordinator), **Lin Schultz**, **Carol Meyer**, **Judy Bartachek** and **Barb Wallick** (team leader).

Barb Wallick (IA) *gives a massage to a National Guard volunteer in Iowa after the spring flooding.*

Member Named Business Person Of 2001

Jack Hayes (OH) was honored May 23 with the "Business Person of the Year" award from the Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, Chamber of Commerce. The award is given to an individual who excels in business, government and community service contributions. Hayes' company, Connecting Touch Therapy, opened in 1995 and has grown to more than 4,400 clients per year and more than 100 new clients each month. He donates a dollar from each massage to a different charity each month and volunteers with his staff at area events. The award is the highest honor given by the chamber.

Florida Publication Features Member's Modality Interest

The March edition of *Attitudes Magazine*, a Sarasota, Florida publication, included an article on **Gwen Beyer (FL)** and Thai massage. Beyer, a graduate student and teacher from the Institute of Thai Massage in Chiang Mai, Thailand, says that Thai massage is effective in communities with an aging population.

Connecticut Chapter Sports Massage Team Begins Busy Season

Members of the AMTA Connecticut Chapter Sports Massage Team met in February to relive the team's outstanding accomplishments in 2000 and to welcome this year's season. The team provided more than 1,000 massages last year. The sports massage team started its 2001 season in May by working for the Race for the Cure, an event to benefit breast cancer research.

Connecticut Sports Team members enjoy the first team banquet, held this past February.

Mutual Concerns Discussed At Federation Meeting

AMTA President **Steve Olson (ND)**, President-Elect **Carolyn Talley (SC)** and Executive Director Marlys Sperger joined representatives of the Federation of Therapeutic Massage, Bodywork and Somatic Practice Organizations for a meeting April 20-21 in Boulder, Colorado. Participants discussed government relations efforts and internal challenges facing the organizations.

The Federation, which usually meets twice a year, serves as a forum for discussion and fosters cooperative efforts. An outstanding example is the legislative packet created by the Federation's Joint Government Relations Committee. To view it, go to AMTA's Web site at: www.amtamassage.org/about/about.htm (click on "Affiliations").

As equal partners, the members of the Federation respect each other's autonomous identities, but realize that their commonalities outweigh their differences. All Federation groups are member-driven, nonprofit organizations dedicated to high standards and professionalism.

Attending were representatives from the following organizations: American Organization for Bodywork Therapies of Asia™, American Polarity Therapy Association, Feldenkrais Guild® of North America, International Somatic Movement Education & Therapy Association, U.S. Trager® Association, Rolf Institute®, which served as host and chair, and AMTA.

Web Site News

Get Your Free Subscription To Online Newsletter

Looking for quick-read articles relating to techniques, building a practice or using the Internet? Check out *e-touch, a massage newsletter*℠. This free monthly e-zine is full of links that will save you time and effort, while keeping you up to date on key issues and topics.

Feature articles focus on techniques, and are written by members who are specialists in these areas. These features are a great way to learn about new methods and brush up on old ones. Other articles focus on Web information and marketing tips to build a practice. Each issue is packed with information like "Frequently Asked Questions," and explanations of and links to new Web site features.

AMTA's *e-touch* is produced in three versions—one for members, one for nonmember massage therapists, and another for consumers and advertisers. All versions include the same feature article but have slight differences. The member version contains more links and information about upcoming educational events. The nonmember version contains information about joining AMTA. The consumer version offers links to *AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist* national locator service.

Many readers have responded favorably to these formats, and have E-mailed AMTA to say so. Since this is an e-zine, *e-touch* is neither archived nor posted on the Web site. It is delivered directly via E-mail to readers at the end of each month.

Based on AMTA's privacy policy, member's E-mail addresses will not be rented or sold to third parties; as such, *e-touch* readers' addresses will not be given out. Subscriptions can be canceled at any time. We also encourage members to submit articles for publication. To sign up for a free subscription to *e-touch*, go to: www.amtamassage.org/publications/mailist.htm, or click on the link in the right-hand column of AMTA's home page.

Access the benefits of AMTA membership at: www.amtamassage.org
User name: friction Password: biceps

Hospitals Responding To Patients' CAM Requests

The public has demanded massage therapy, and other forms of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), more and more frequently. Due to this steadily increasing interest, health-care organizations have responded and are providing more CAM in various settings, including hospitals.

In a 2000 biennial Deloitte & Touche survey of more than 5,000 CEOs from acute-care hospitals, researchers found that massage therapy is available at 15 percent of responding hospitals. The survey, "U.S. Hospitals and the Future of Health Care," showed that larger hospitals provide more forms of CAM. The survey also showed that many of these CEOs are receiving CAM therapies, even though their hospitals may not offer such services.

Furthermore, hospitals also have begun to open their facilities to massage therapy schools. The Bodymechanics School of Myotherapy & Massage, an AMTA School member, located in Olympia, Washington, is the first massage therapy school in the United States to be located in a hospital setting. Here, students receive a well-balanced education from both massage therapists and medical doctors.

However, while the number of hospitals offering CAM therapies is still climbing, issues have arisen with insurance reimbursement. AMTA Member-At-Large **Debra Brooks (IA)**, who attended the March 2001 Congress on Healthcare Management in Chicago, said of the conference: "The most interesting comment I heard came from several executives/directors, stating it was their experience that holistic health-care services and insurance were like oil and water," says Brooks. "They don't mix because insurance companies do not understand the underlying principles of alternative medicine." (See the Summer 2001 *Massage Therapy Journal*® for a pro-and-con perspective on the topic of insurance reimbursement.)

AMTA Assists JCAHO

AMTA has responded to the demand to provide more massage in hospitals. The association provided executives accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) with a press release and brochure about AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist *national locator service. The materials were sent as a follow-up to a new guideline in JCAHO's* Hospital Manual (full edition), *which encourages hospitals to provide patients with information about massage for pain management.*

Additional Media Spokespersons Needed

In recent years, AMTA has provided professional training for volunteers and members of the AMTA Executive Committee to serve as the organization's media spokespersons. These volunteers have done an outstanding job representing AMTA and the massage therapy profession, in more than 100 media interviews coordinated between March 1, 2000, and February 28, 2001. Because of increasing media requests, this year AMTA needs to train up to three additional volunteers as spokespersons, along with new Executive Committee members.

AMTA is seeking volunteers with experience and expertise in specific areas of interest for spokesperson training. We are looking for volunteer Professional members who either own or manage a spa, are fluent in Spanish, are nurses or physicians, or who have a massage therapy practice in the city of Los Angeles.

Interested candidates should practice out of a location that will look inviting and professional in photographs or on television. They will need to be comfortable talking in front of a camera or on the radio, and be flexible enough in their schedules to accommodate media requests. Most reporters and producers need interviews on very short notice, and the majority of interviews are conducted via telephone.

If you match any of the qualifications listed above and are interested in becoming an AMTA media spokesperson, or for more information, contact Joseph Schlesinger in the Communications Department at 847-864-0123, ext. 133, or via E-mail at: *jschlesinger@amtamassage.org*.

Massage Research Agenda Sets Future Course

The results of the Massage Research Agenda Workgroup (MRAW), and its recommendations for future massage research, will be released in the Fall 2001 issue of *Massage Therapy Journal*® (*MTJ*). In March 1999, the AMTA Foundation convened a conference of massage therapists, bodyworkers and research scientists to begin framing a research agenda for the field of massage and bodywork. The results of nearly two years of consultation and development are now ready, and will be published for the first time in *MTJ*.

Look for your Fall 2001 issue of *MTJ* the middle of August. To preorder extra copies of this issue, or to order a reprint of the article, contact Member Services at 847-864-0123. Your request will be processed promptly and mailed after the issue is printed in mid-August.

AMTA Foundation News

Latz To Present At Post-Convention Workshop

John Latz, president and founder of the Institute for Structural Integration, will be hosting a special workshop to benefit the AMTA Foundation following the 2001 AMTA National Convention in Quebec City, Canada. The workshop, "Connective Tissue Massage for the Back, Neck and Shoulders," will be held Sunday, October 21 (12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.), and Monday, October 22 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

"This is a wonderful opportunity to support the AMTA Foundation in its work and research," says Latz. "I am excited to bring massage therapists together for this common purpose. I hope that other massage therapists take note and do their part in helping the Foundation."

Latz's Connective Tissue Massage workshops are generally held over a four-day period, so he has taken the principles from his regular workshop and developed a 12-hour training program focusing on the back, neck and shoulders. Program participants will be able to take the skills they learn and apply them to the entire body. He encourages involvement in the course and says, "It promises to be a class where participants can take the work they learn into their practice and immediately utilize it with their clients."

For more specific information about the program, contact Latz via phone at 305-754-0983, E-mail at: *ablehands@erols.com* or on his Web site at: **www.johnlatz.com**. If you would like registration information, call 847-864-0123, ext. 143, or visit: **www.amtamassage.org/education/quebec.htm**.

Election News

This year's AMTA National Election has a different format, as the 2001 Commission on Nominations has adopted a new function. The ballot you will receive by mail in August may appear the same as last year's ballot, but if you look closely, you will notice an important difference. This year, the commission has not chosen a slate of candidates. Due to bylaw and policy changes adopted by the AMTA Board of Directors, the commission has shifted its role from that of a recruiting and endorsing body to that of a recruiting body only. Other changes were adopted that will go into effect next year and will alter the look of the ballot significantly.

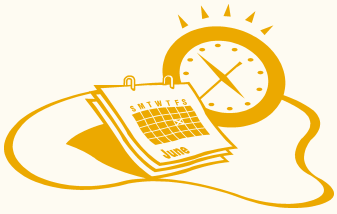
A Special Committee to Study the Effects of Recent Changes in the Nominations, Elections and Office of the President, chaired by **Dolly Wallace (MI)** worked throughout 2000 to recommend improvements in AMTA's governance. The 2001 Commission on Nominations was aware of the recommendations, and began its work prepared as either an endorsing and recruiting commission or strictly a recruiting commission. The volunteers (**John Balletto (RI)**; **Adela Basayne (OR)**, chair; **Barbara Lis (IN)**; **Chris Voltarel (CA)**; and **Carl Wilson (WA)**) committed to an early recruiting effort. The result of this effort has been that this year, member participation in the elections process has so far exceeded every previous year since the mail ballot was adopted. More applications were requested, and more members are running for office!

Although the commission did not select a slate of candidates, it did thoroughly evaluate each application, and verified the eligibility of applicants, as new policy requires.

Let's continue the trend of increased participation. A healthy democratic process depends on the informed involvement of all who are eligible to vote. When you get your ballot in the mail, exercise your right as a Professional member to direct the course of AMTA by filling it out and sending it back by the September 1, 2001 deadline.

Calendar

Regional & National Events



2001

August 9–12
AMTA Council of Schools Teachers Conference
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 130
Exhibitor Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 113

August 10–12
AMTA National Learning Center
St. Louis, Missouri
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 130
Exhibitor Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 113

October 14–16
AMTA Board of Directors Meeting
Québec City, Canada

October 17–21
AMTA Annual Convention
Quebec City, Canada
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 143
Exhibitor Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 113

October 21–27
National Massage Therapy Awareness Week
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 149

2002

January 23–26
AMTA Council of Schools Annual Meeting
Tucson, Arizona
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 130
Exhibitor Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 113

October 2–6
AMTA Annual Convention
Portland, Oregon

October 20–26
National Massage Therapy Awareness Week
Contact: 847-864-0123, ext. 149

Education Events

Allons á Québec – Let's Go To Quebec!

Join your colleagues in Quebec City, Canada, for the 2001 AMTA National Convention, October 17-21. Don't miss this opportunity to take four-hour courses on Osteopathic Soft Tissue Manipulation and Psycho-Physical Attunement by keynote presenters Leon Chaitow and Deane Juhan. Another keynote presenter, Patricia Benjamin, will share her insight on the historical traditions of massage therapy.

Stay current in the profession by attending the annual business meeting, national committee presentations and short courses. Attend our French-style social events to renew old friendships, meet new people and exchange ideas.

Class size is limited, so register today. For registration information, contact 847-864-0123, ext. 143, or visit the AMTA Web site at: www.amtamassage.org/education/quebec.htm.

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